William F. Buckley Jr.

# Worries about the CIA and FBI

When last April the Department of Justice brought in an indictment against former FBI Agent John Kearney, for using allegedly illegal tactics in attempting during the early '70s to penetrate and frustrate the terrorist Weathermen, a few observers became convinced that we had entered the lunatic phase of our campaign to purify ourselves, and a committee was born.

It is called the Citizens' Legal Defense Fund for the FBI, its address is Suite 808, 95 Madison Avenue, New York, and co-chairmen are Clare Boothe Luce, former Secretary of the Treasury William Simon and former Sen. James L. Buckley.

The initial resolution of the committee was to raise funds to give John Kearney a proper defense, and the result was electric. Contributions came in even from the ranks of the best-known recent purifiers. Leon Jaworski, for instance, the point-man in the Watergate prosecutions. Enough money to hire Edward Bennett Williams, who had expressed sympathy for the victimization of Kearney. So the defense is ready, when the attorney general strikes.

But the committee did not then go out of business. It is inundated with requests for help from other former agents of the FBI who are being harassed by civil suits. And last week, William Simon sent out an appeal for funds enclosing a document which is a chiller and which everyone concerned with the mad demobilization of our internal security apparatus should read — and can do so by asking the committee for a copy.

It is a very long letter, from an FBI agent whose identity is protected. It tells us things we ought to know about domestic security, things that harmonize with the worrisome analysis recently given nationally by Time and Newsweek to the related problem of the CIA, and external security.

William Simon reminds us that the New York Times star foreign correspondent C.L. Sulzberger wrote, "It is believed Moscow has found a way to paralyze the U.S. by striking at its principal security services. As a consequence of such operations (attributed in part to the KGB's Department of Disinformation) the effectiveness of the CIA and FBI is held to be extremely anemic by apparently internal U.S. political arguments."

Listen now to a paragraph from the lead story in Time magazine on CIA Director Stansfield Turner:

"A Soviet KGB agent told a Time correspondent in Cairo last week: 'Of all the operations that the Soviet Union and the U.S. have conducted against each other, none have benefited the KGB as much as the campaign in the U.S. to discredit the CIA. In our wildest scenarios, we could never have anticipated such a plus for our side. It's the kind of gift all espionage men dream about. Today our boys have it a lot easier, and we didn't have to lift a finger. You did all our work for us.'"

The agent [who wrote the committee] reminds us that in recent testimony before a Senate subcommittee, the chief of the Secret Service admitted that there are now "cities in the United States which the President is advised not to visit. The reason: the erosion of police intelligence as a result of leakages to the press and the laws on disclosure (notably the 1974 amendments to the Freedom of Information Act) has reached the point at which the actions of radical demonstrators and potential terrorists could not be predicted."

It is a symbol of our time that the Civil Service Commission, the agent reports, dropped the formerly conventional question put to applicants for federal employment: "Are you, or have you ever been, a member of the Communist Party?"

If it can be said that innocent-minded fellow travelers were once victims of thoughtless government pressure, the contemporary victims today, the Citizens' Legal Defense Fund points out, are men and women who have worked in our security forces.